

NELAC 7i
Arlington, VA
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This has been a long and intense week of concentration on one subject: NELAC. We reviewed and provided thoughtful comments on the proposed revisions to the standards. Some of these proposals are significant and will require an adjustment in our thought processes and the way we do business. We have had an opportunity to learn from different perspectives and I hope each of us return to our respective real jobs with new commitment and a firmer belief in the NELAC process. We can view the NELAC partnership as one that is seen as a success story and an example by many other programs. It is something that I am honored to be a part of.

But NELAC is also at a critical cross roads in its short history. How do we proceed from here? What we will be in five years may look very different from what we are now, but I think there are some important characteristics that will endure.

- We are dedicated. The committees have worked long and hard to provide us with additional refinements to the existing standards, and some new ones to add to the collection.
- We are committed. This is evident in the overwhelming belief in the process that is called NELAC and the desire to continue to be a part of and improve that process.
- We are enthusiastic. Rarely have I observed the sustained enthusiasm for a single goal and vision.
- We are creative. We have demonstrated the ability to think outside the box – to find different and novel means of continuing NELAC in a different structure.
- We are flexible. This is a key to NELAC's success. We may have differing opinions and perspectives, but it seems that we are always able to find a solution.
- We have proven to be resilient. The type of news that we faced this week may have discouraged other organizations but because
- We have a cause and a common goal: to enhance and improve the NELAC partnership in different and novel ways, I am very optimistic about the future.

My mid-term assessment of NELAC? This meeting deserves straight A's. The cooperation is palpable, there is a heightened sense of commitment, we are talking through the issues of consistency, and I think we have done a better job of communicating our needs and objectives. This has been a very successful meeting. We have accomplished what we were supposed to do and much more.

The final report card – well you will need to attend NELAC 8 for the answer. Florida is looking forward to the pleasure of seeing all of you again in Tampa. Do make plans to attend and take advantage of a little fun in the sun.

I want to thank Jackie for doing such a wonderful job of hosting this meeting, to her contractor, ADI

for handling the conference arrangements, and to Anteon for providing some very professional support. I wish each of you safe journeys home, a joyous holiday season, and best wishes for the new year. I hope that each of you return to your homes with a renewed confidence in the NELAC process and I know that whatever the path that we take: We will succeed.

Fair winds and smooth sailing!

Thank you.